

## Leadership Studies Signature Course

## Faculty Team

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Spring 2018

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## Course Description

The Leadership Studies Year—fall and spring semesters—provides students with the opportunity to learn the dynamics of leadership through the prism of guided work within a congregation.

The structure of learning and congregational engagement in the spring continues the work begun in the Congregational Studies year and the fall semester of Leadership Studies. Students will have the opportunity to blend academic learning with structured reflection on the multiple dimensions of congregational life. They will meet MONTHLY with their Congregational Lay Committee and WEEKLY with their Teaching Pastor. In addition, students will launch and lead the focused initiative they developed in Congregational Studies.

- The internship site is at the heart of the Leadership Studies year. Weekly assignments ask the student to examine and analyze their leadership and ministry in dialogue with their triad/group, their Teaching Pastor, Lay Committee, and with ML faculty.
- Interns work an average of 20 hours per week from February through graduation in mid-May. Certification of hours worked in the congregation is due at the end of each semester. Longer periods of service may be negotiated with the congregation.
- The focus of the Leadership Studies year is twofold:
  - Continuing to learn the basics of congregational/organizational dynamics around leadership, change, and conflict;
  - Honing the student's leadership through their focused initiative, and presentation of the results of that work in mid-April.
- Readings and assignments help interpret and analyze the myths and realities of leadership in congregational life;
- Self- and congregational analysis allows all parties to get beyond gut-level critique in order to minister effectively and holistically to individuals and groups;
- Religious work must be nested in relationships of loving accountability, integrity, curiosity, and willingness to work with human imperfections;
- Growing understandings of congregations as systems will be used to place observations in context and to begin to comprehend positive and effective ways of making change as professional religious leaders.

In addition to congregational work, there will be weekly readings, Dialogue Triad meetings and individual memos/sermons, and discussion board conversations, three **Saturday conference calls, 9:00 – 11:00 am Central Time**. In order to pass the class, participation in all assignments, including conference calls, is required. *If there are extreme circumstances that lead to missing a Saturday conference call, contact Dr. Nicole Kirk to arrange make-up assignments. Missing more than one conference call will result in the failure of the course. The Saturday call is a part of the classroom time for the course.*

For successful completion of this course, you will need to complete the Final Evaluation process for Internships using the materials from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. These materials are required by the school and must be submitted to the credentialing office of the Unitarian Universalist Association by those students seeking credentialing. Please see the UUA Internship Manual for 2017-18 for the internship evaluation forms and other information about the credentialing process. If you have questions contact either Dr. Nicole Kirk, team lead for Leadership studies ([nkirk@meadville.edu](mailto:nkirk@meadville.edu)) or Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube the Interim Director of Contextual Ministry ([astraube@meadville.edu](mailto:astraube@meadville.edu))

## Learning Objectives

This semester the course will help students deepen their competency in the following areas:

- Identification of leadership style – strengths and areas of growth;
- Casting a dynamic vision for an organization;
- Dynamics of leading change across differences and the role of conflict;
- Increasing comfort levels with conflict and learning the differences between positive and negative conflict;
- Building effective relationships among staff;
- Patterns of cultural change in organizations;
- Ministerial presence and authority;
- Congregational governance, administration, and management;

## Required Texts

- William Chris Hobgood, *Welcoming Resistance* (2001)
- Essays, book chapters, and other assigned readings, videos, and links will be posted on Populi.
- UUMA Guidelines.

## Key Course Dates

### Saturday Calls 9:00 – 11:00 CDT

February 17

March 10 (ALL Class Call)

April 28

## Statement Regarding Accommodations

Meadville Lombard is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, they should contact the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, Ken McHugh ([kmchugh@meadville.edu](mailto:kmchugh@meadville.edu)) (312) 212-0673. Please note that classroom accommodations cannot be provided without an approved Accommodations Form.

## Copyright and Fair Use

Meadville Lombard works to ensure that the members of our academic community (students, staff, adjunct, affiliate, and full-time faculty) participate as informed citizens in the scholarly community and comply with applicable copyright law. In the US, copyright law was created to ensure protections for creators of original work as well as encourage an environment where ideas can be freely exchanged, adapted, and commented on in the spirit of scholarly inquiry and creativity. As a general rule, the material instructors make available for classroom use falls under different compliance rules than that used in other public settings (congregations, presentations, GA, etc.). Please refrain from sharing classroom material (texts, articles, music, video, excerpts) outside the educational setting and take care to cite your sources appropriately. Please ask your instructor or the Director of the Library and IT for guidance if needed. Together, we can ensure that Meadville operates in conscientious compliance with applicable law while remaining flexible to ensure a vibrant exchange of ideas in the community.

## Syllabus Changes

While every effort has been made to make this syllabus as accurate as possible, from time to time modifications may be required—especially with a new teaching team in place. If changes to the syllabus are necessary, we will notify the class by sending an email to students via your Meadville Lombard email address. We reserve the right to add or delete assignments.

## Meadville Lombard Intern Compensation Guideline

**NOTE:** *This is our policy, stated more clearly, on internship compensation. We wanted everyone to be aware of it but it is unnecessary for Leadership Studies Teaching Pastors 2017 to contact the Director of Contextual Ministry this year as specified below.* Meadville Lombard strongly encourages students to intern at congregations that provide compensation. Teaching Pastors of congregations not providing compensation must be in conversation with the Director of Contextual Ministry for approval and to explore whether or not other types of financial assistance (i.e. mileage, preaching fee) are possible. *Teaching Pastors should initiate a compensation conversation with their student during the Fall previous to the start of the internship.* The Director of Contextual Ministry will follow up in the January before the internship about the conversation.

## Assessment & Evaluation Frameworks

This course is a pass/fail course. Building upon the approach of Community and Congregational Studies, we draw upon an integrative pedagogy for theological education and ministerial formation that addresses:

- the “knowing” dimension of learning (academic excellence and rigor, theological voice) through critical examination of multidisciplinary resources helpful to understanding the nature and tasks of contextual theology and ministry in a multicultural, pluralistic world;
- the “being” dimension of learners (ministerial formation, vocational identity, religious self-understanding) by nurturing student self-awareness as this emerges through collaboration with diverse cultures, service organizations, congregations and faith perspectives and linking this to the ways we conceive, imagine, and embody our religious lives and vocations; and, finally,
- the “doing” dimension of learning (praxis) through exploration of approaches and resources for the wise, competent, and agile practice of leadership in ministry.

## Passing Entails

- Active participation in every aspect of the course (including all Saturday conference calls) and completion of reading and writing assignments;
- Completion of the requisite number of on-site hours;
- Meeting weekly with your Dialogue Triad;
- Engagement in ministerial formation as a mutual process, that is, showing a disposition to humility, charity, honesty and diligence, and a willingness to witness to and support the growing process of your peers;
- All other requirements as agreed upon with your Teaching Pastor, and ML faculty.

## Assignment Types

**Individual Memos**—for these assignments, the student will meet with their Dialogue Group to discuss the assignment and turn in an individual memo under the assignment section for that week’s lesson. The week there are individual memos or sermons, DUE ON FRIDAYS @ Midnight CT

**Dialogue Triad Memos**—for these assignments, you will meet with your dialogue triad and following your conversation draft a joint memo that provides a synthesis of the group’s dialogue. It is NOT a memo that captures three/four individual reports. *At times, the assignment may ask that you then post the memo on the course discussion board.* DUE ON FRIDAYS @ Midnight CT

**Discussion Board Posts**—instead of group memos and individual memos, this year we are moving to a discussion board model so that students can interact and learn from one another. Not everyone will be participating in the discussion boards every week. It is your responsibility to mark on your calendar the weeks you have responsibilities. Leaders and Responders groups are determined by the assigned first letter of their last name. If you have permission, you may bring parts of your dialogue triad conversation in your leader comments or responses, but do not share what you have not received permission from your colleagues. You will be expected to discuss all assignments with your Dialogue Triad. Remember the UUMA Guidelines. *On the weeks of Saturday Calls, there is not an additional assignment-only prep for the conference call, which may include reading, watching videos, interviews, and reflection.*

### Leader Groups

1. Meet with your Dialogue Group to create insight in relation to the weekly assignment.
2. Each individual of the Dialogue Group is responsible for posting a reflection on the discussion board--due by Thursday evening.
3. These reflection posts should respond to the assignment question in a way that is informed by your Dialogue Group discussion.
4. Consider the “text” (internship site, book, podcast, article, social group, etc.) as a foundation for your thinking, emotional response(s). Remember to think about how your “social location” shapes the way your frame about topic.
5. Write about an aspect of text that you think is insightful, or that you do not understand, or something that jars you.
6. Formulate an insightful question or two about the reading and then attempt to answer your own questions.
7. As you read, reflect on the guiding reading questions. You are not limited to answering these questions in your discussion posts, but they can provide a helpful beginning

### Responder Groups

- There are multiple responder groups. This means you DO NOT have to respond on the discussion board every week, but you are expected to READ your colleagues’ contributions and responses. You will find them valuable.

- Groupings are listed in Populi, under the Info tab, under files. Find your name, and note the weeks you are supposed to respond/add/contribute to the Leaders' postings as a Group. Their entries and yours should make solid contributions to the discussion.
- **200-250 word** response to others' posts. Responders should demonstrate an engagement with the assigned texts in their responses.
- Responses should be posted by 10:59 pm (CST) Sunday night.
- **EXAMPLE: Week 3 reading starts on Monday. Leader Groups post by Friday at midnight. Assigned Responder Groups need to post responses no later than Sunday night by 10:59 pm CT.**

## Covenant for Discussion Groups

- **Show up** prepared. Do the required work for each assignment. Keep to your commitment to be present weekly in your group.
- **Show good faith.** Engage your peers with openness and a willingness to "try on" another point of view. The most persuasive opinions are supported by evidence - examples, facts, and reasoned opinions. If you disagree with something, say why. If you agree, say why.
- **Do appropriate preparation.** For example, do reading, viewing, and lesson activity work before you express yourself.
- **Keep your comments succinct.** A short paragraph or two is plenty unless you are posting something that by nature has to be longer - a historical timeline, for example. Sometimes a sentence is plenty.
- **Check your message before you send it.** Pay attention to your spelling and grammar, and be sure that your message makes the points you want to make in a clear and concise way.
- **Observe appropriate boundaries.** While this is a closed, private class, remember that everything "online" never goes away. . Candidates on the path for ordained ministry: remember you are expected to follow UUMA Guidelines, regardless of your status.
- **Engage ideas** with curiosity as opposed to judgement, critique.
- **Be a good colleague.** If you promise something that you can't do, let your colleagues know. Communication is key in leadership.
- **Be positive when offering advice.** If one of your fellow students asks for opinions about his or her ideas, be encouraging with your comments. If you see weaknesses in someone's writing or ideas, focus on describing the strengths to keep up, as well as the opportunities for improvement. Remember, at some point, every person's perspective is limited—aka, your own!
- **Be gracious when receiving advice.** When you contribute to a discussion, you are hoping that other people will feel you have said something worthwhile and suggest useful ideas to build on yours. When

others are critical, assume that they are trying to provide a critique, not criticism in the negative sense. Even if they don't seem diplomatic, be gracious in response.

- **Help move the discussion along.** When contributing to a discussion, read other people's comments first. Introduce new ideas, but also build on what others have said (building on other people's ideas is a sign that you're actually "listening" other perspectives). Be sure to refer clearly to the ideas you are building on. Do not, however, copy someone else's entire message into your reply when you only need to refer to a sentence or two.

## Leadership Studies Weekly Topics, Spring 2018

See Populi, under Lessons, for the readings, materials, and additional details and links.

### Week 1

#### February 12 – Shared Ministry with Joy Berry, Assistant Director of the Fahs Collaborative\*

**\*This week's reading and interview assignment are in preparation for our Saturday Call on Saturday, February 17**

The term “shared ministry” has been used, especially in the past, to describe a general approach to congregational ministry, where the shared work of both the laity and professional leadership cultivate capacity and health. More recently, shared ministry as a concept and practice specific to congregational staff teams has been the focus of work by the leadership of LREDA, UUMA, and UUMN.

Religious Educators, ministers, and musicians were convened from those professional organizations to serve on the **Joint Task Force for Excellence in Shared Ministry** in 2012. Their charge was to “identify best practices...and recommend training opportunities (new and existing) to nurture excellence in shared ministry”. Subsequently, the **Shared Ministry Resource Team** curated a list of usable resources supportive of shared ministry. Most recently, a **shared staff team assessment tool** has been developed.

**Read:** the report from the Joint Task Force for Excellence in Shared Ministry (2013)

**Watch/Read:** the Shared Ministry video of four interviews with participants from the Joint Task Force and Shared Ministry Resource Teams the written response from Tandi Rogers.

**Reflect:** on the staff team leadership approach in your congregation. Is there evidence of shared ministry that you can see? Where and how do you notice it happening? Are there areas where do you not observe shared ministry, but can imagine how it would benefit the staff team or the congregation?

**Week**  
**2****February 19 – Worship with Rev. Dr. Nicole Kirk**

**Assignment:** In your Dialogue Group, address the questions below, on the Populi Discussion Board Post. Students with last names A-J are the Leaders for this discussion board and students K-Z are the Responders for this post. *Leader Groups post by Friday at midnight. Assigned Responder Groups need to post responses no later than Sunday night by 10:59 pm CT.*

How do we embody our theology and ecclesiology in the worship life of the congregations that we lead and serve? Discuss in your Dialogue Group an order of service that you have done in your congregation. Explore how it reflects the theology and ecclesiology of your congregation, and explore how it reflects, or does not reflect, your own theology and ecclesiology. In your Dialogue Group memo, discuss the ways in which you would shape an order of service to reflect your theology and ecclesiology. NOTE this is not the practical aspects of the order...but the theology and ecclesiology of each element. If the element is layered, identify those places and again give a theological and ecclesiological explanation.

## Week 3

### February 26 – Digital Privacy and Social Justice with John Leeker, Associate Director of Library and Archives

**Read and Review:** (links provided in Populi)

<https://www.citylab.com/equity/2016/12/how-police-are-watching-on-social-media/508991/>

<https://ssd EFF.org/en/playlist/activist-or-protester>

#### Reflection Questions:

- 1) How does online privacy relate to commitments to confidentiality with colleagues and congregants?
- 2) Through email, online messaging, or social media, have you unintentionally exposed sensitive information?
- 3) When have you taken steps to ensure private and secure communications doing social justice work and pastoral care? Is this something on anyone's radar in your congregation?
- 4) How does digital surveillance intersect with white supremacy and other systemic oppressions?

**Assignment:** Discuss the assignment readings and questions in your dialogue groups and then post on the discussion board. Students with last names K-Z are the Leaders for this discussion board and students A-J are the Responders for this post. *Leader Groups post by Friday at midnight. Assigned Responder Groups need to post responses no later than Sunday night by 10:59 pm CT.*

## Week 4

### March 5 – Prep for Saturday Call

**March 10 - 9:00 am to 11:00 am**

**All Class Call**

**Details forthcoming from the Teaching Faculty**

Week  
5

**March 12 – Community Studies to Leadership Studies  
Signature Course Synthesis with Rev. Drs. Bill Schulz  
and Nicole Kirk**

You started your MDIV with Community Studies and at a community site internship where you spent 8 hours a week in service. You are now in the last semester of your two-year part-time congregation internship. This week, we ask you to intentionally reflect on the connections between the internships and your growth as a minister and leader.

**Reflection Questions:** Think back on your experience of community service your first year of theological education. How did that shape your understanding of ministry and of community and congregational partnerships? Combine that with what you have learned this year in your focused initiative and in your other areas of congregational involvement. In light of your experiences, what have you learned about what you can do in the future to create service learning opportunities for others, and what can you do to shape a congregation as a learning community?

**Assignment:** In your Dialogue Group, address the following questions, and then submit a 2-3 page collective memo. On the memo, list the members of your Dialogue Group on the memo. Post in Populi.

Week  
6-7

**Spring Intensives in Chicago  
March 16-30  
No Assignments**

**Week**  
**8****April 2 – Finance (How you spend the money) with Bill Schulz**

Do you know how to read a church budget? Do you understand the basics of institutional finance?

**Interview Preparation:** Arrange to receive a tutorial from your teaching pastor about the detailed budget (and financial statements) of the church you serve. Make sure you are conversant with each item. Share the budget with the members of your triad, answering any questions they may have.

**Assignment:** a one-three page Dialogue Group memo that addresses the following questions: How might a budget reflect the values, mission and vision for a church. Without knowing anything else about a church, what overall trends and challenges can you glean from examining its budget? What can you not learn about a church through a review of its budget?

**Week**  
**9****April 9 – Focus Initiative Reflections and Analysis**

Reflect on your Focused Initiative, summarize the journey, and analyze your experiences in a memo.

**Read:** Hobgood book as a conversation partner for your reflection paper.

**Assignment:** Write a 2-3 page reflection and send it to the members of your Dialogue Group. Discuss what you have learned from the Focused Initiative about the complexities of leadership and congregational life. Highlight what you have learned from failure, unexpected consequences, timing, contextual complexities, the pace of institutional change, the strengths/growing edges of your own leadership style. For example, explore different possible causes of failure: TP not behind it; congregation not behind it; changes in congregational/community priorities; vision not compelling; or powerful vision without implementation skills. Explore lessons from your failures and successes that apply to future leadership. Post your individual memo in Populi assignments.

Week  
10

## April 16 – Internship Final Evaluations

### Post Evaluations FRIDAY, April 20, 2018, midnight

By April 20<sup>th</sup> have your Final Internship Evaluations completed by your Lay Committee, Teaching Pastor, and your Self-Evaluation.

**Assignment:** As you reflect back on this second year of work with your teaching congregation, take some time to reflect on what has been most rewarding and most challenging. What do you celebrate in your own growth as a leader? Where are the growing edges that you know you will continue to address? What strengths have you discovered that may have surprised you and/or you knew were there and blossomed. Where might you want to garner additional resources?

For this week, discuss these questions with your Dialogue Group. Your assignment is to post a copy of your Internship Evaluations – all three parts - using the MFC forms provided.

Faculty will respond to your final internship evaluations in the *End of Year Letter*. You will receive this letter by the end of the semester, May 18, 2018.

We also encourage you to seek our resources for gaps in your ministerial formation. For example, making yourself familiar, if you are not already, with the UUA Trauma Ministry resource website, BLUU website resources for worship, action, and religious education, Fahs Collaborative blog and website, anti-oppression work, coaching, spiritual direction, webinars offered by colleagues on weddings, etc.

**\*\*Please Note:** for those of you who have not yet seen the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, this document will be among those submitted to the MFC as well.

## Week 11

### **April 23 – Effective Fundraising with Rev. Dr. Bill Schulz and Guest**

#### **Saturday Call Prep – April 28 Saturday Call 9:00 am to 11:00 am CT**

**Reading:** “The Pastor’s Stewardship Role” by Gary Fenton

**Assignment:** Interview someone who has experience with fundraising. Ask them questions like these and share their answers and insights:

- What are the keys to fundraising success?
- How do you balance letting the donor take the lead and “pushing” them to offer a gift?
- How do you determine how much to ask someone for?
- If you err in that judgment, is it better to ask too much or too little?
- How do you gauge whether prospective donors will respond more positively to general support or support for a specific project?
- What is the toughest thing for you about “making the ASK?” How have you overcome that?
- Be prepared to do a role play in our Saturday conference call in which you are soliciting a major donor played by Bill or Lee.

**Discuss:** the interview questions and answers you received in your Dialogue Group in preparation for roleplays during Saturday call.